



[Home](#) > [About](#) > [Data services](#) > [Data integration](#) > [Integrated data](#) > Administrative data snapshot of population and housing

Administrative data snapshot of population and housing

Insights into Australia's population and housing from experimental administrative data

Integrated data

- ▶ [Person Level Integrated Data Asset \(PLIDA\)](#)
- ▶ [Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment \(BLADE\)](#)
- [Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset \(ACLD\)](#)
- [Linked Employer-Employee Database \(LEED\)](#)
- [Australian Census and Temporary Entrants Integrated Dataset \(ACTEID\)](#)
- [Australian Census and Migrants Integrated Dataset \(ACMID\)](#)
- [Personal Income Tax and Migrants Integrated Dataset \(PITMID\)](#)
- [National Disability Data Asset \(NDDA\)](#)
- [Administrative Data Snapshot of Population and Housing \(ADS\)](#)

On this page

- [Supporting the Census with administrative data](#)
- [Complementing the Census with an Administrative data snapshot \(ADS\)](#)
- [How is the Administrative data snapshot being released?](#)
- [What are other countries doing?](#)
- [We'd like your feedback](#)

Close

The Administrative Data Snapshot of Population and Housing (ADS) is a new, experimental release of population and housing data built from administrative data sources.

Like the Census, the ADS provides a snapshot of Australian people and houses at a point in time but has a smaller and different set of person and housing characteristics.

What is administrative data?

Administrative data is information that government departments, businesses and other organisations collect. They collect information for a range of reasons such as:

- registrations
- sales
- record keeping.

Some examples of administrative data:

- personal income tax information from the Australian Taxation Office

- information about the number of people who use Medicare from the Department of Health and Aged Care.

We only collect and use administrative data for statistics and research.

Supporting the Census with administrative data

The Census is one of Australia's [most important national assets \(/census/about-census/value-census/\)](/census/about-census/value-census/). It is a snapshot of Australia and tells the story of how we are changing. The Census helps us understand what we need now, and into the future.

Like many other countries, Australia is increasing its [use of administrative data \(/census/about-census/2021-census-overview/administrative-data/\)](/census/about-census/2021-census-overview/administrative-data/) in how it runs the 5-yearly Census. Each step along the way we are carefully considering data security and privacy protections, including undertaking Privacy Impact Assessments.

For the 2016 Census we used administrative data to create an [Address register \(/statistics/research/abs-address-register-users-guide/\)](/statistics/research/abs-address-register-users-guide/). This helped us significantly reduce the cost of conducting the Census by mailing out online access codes and forms to most Australians instead of dropping them off in person.

For the 2021 Census we expanded the use of administrative data further, using integrated data from the [Multi-agency data integration project \(/about/data-services/data-integration/integrated-data/multi-agency-data-integration-project-madip/\)](/about/data-services/data-integration/integrated-data/multi-agency-data-integration-project-madip/) (MADIP) to [improve the quality of Census counts \(/articles/how-administrative-data-improved-quality-2021-census/\)](/articles/how-administrative-data-improved-quality-2021-census/) and official population estimates. In April 2023, we also enhanced the data available from the 2021 Census by adding [new income measures derived from administrative data \(/articles/new-census-insights-income-australia-using-administrative-data/\)](/articles/new-census-insights-income-australia-using-administrative-data/).

Following the Census, the Statistical independent assurance panel, in its [report on the quality of 2021 Census data \(/census/about-census/report-quality-2021-census-data-statistical-independent-assurance-panel-pdf/\)](/census/about-census/report-quality-2021-census-data-statistical-independent-assurance-panel-pdf/), was 'pleased to note data quality improvements resulting from enhancements to occupancy determination and imputation for non-responding households, most notably as a result of the use of administrative data.' The Panel highlighted greater use of administrative data in their opportunities for future censuses.

For the 2026 Census, we are investigating further enhancements using administrative data. These include the possibility of adding more topics, replacing some questions, providing missing information, and using administrative data to run the Census more efficiently.

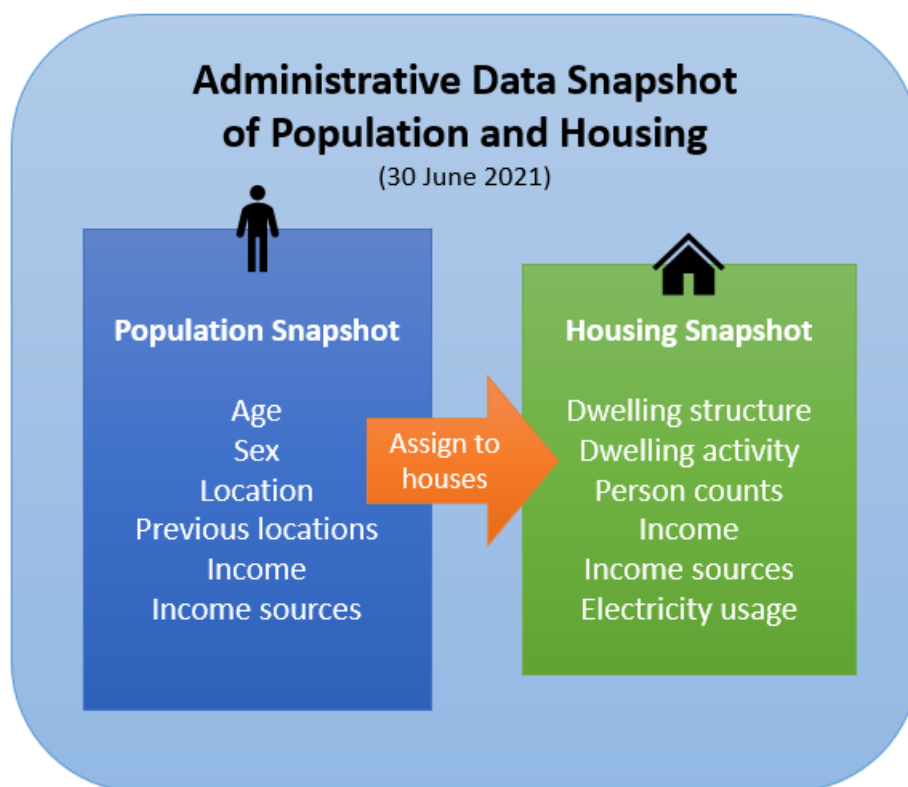
Complementing the Census with an Administrative data snapshot (ADS)

To support the 2021 Census, we used [MADIP \(/about/data-services/data-integration/integrated-data/multi-agency-data-integration-project-madip/\)](/about/data-services/data-integration/integrated-data/multi-agency-data-integration-project-madip/) and the [ABS Address register \(/statistics/research/abs-address-register-users-guide/\)](/statistics/research/abs-address-register-users-guide/) to create two administrative datasets: one about [people \(/statistics/people/population/administrative-data-snapshot-population-and-housing-experimental-population-data/30-june-2021/\)](/statistics/people/population/administrative-data-snapshot-population-and-housing-experimental-population-data/30-june-2021/) and one about [houses \(/statistics/people/housing/administrative-data-snapshot-population-and-housing-experimental-housing-data/30-june-2021/\)](/statistics/people/housing/administrative-data-snapshot-population-and-housing-experimental-housing-data/30-june-2021/). As well as improving the Census, we've found this data provides new, valuable population and housing information in its own right.

To show its potential, we've refined the datasets into a new, experimental product: an Administrative data snapshot of population and housing (ADS). Like the Census, the ADS provides a snapshot of Australian people and houses around the middle of 2021.

While the ADS is experimental and more limited than the Census, it provides a valuable complement to Census data because:

1. It helps give a fuller picture of counts of people and houses by providing a view which is similar, yet different. Understanding the differences highlights the strengths and weaknesses in both data sources.
2. It provides new data on population and housing that isn't available on the Census. For example, it provides information on how people moved each year between Censuses, some new measures of income and some new measures of housing activity.
3. It shows the potential to provide Census-like data more frequently than the 5-yearly Census. Updated snapshots could be released between Censuses.



How is the Administrative data snapshot being released?

The first release of the Administrative data snapshot of population and housing is via a set of [population data cubes](https://statistics/people/population/administrative-data-snapshot-population-and-housing-experimental-population-data/30-june-2021#data-downloads) and a set of [housing data cubes](https://statistics/people/housing/administrative-data-snapshot-population-and-housing-experimental-housing-data/30-june-2021#data-downloads). This release is focused specifically on a mid-2021 time point to allow direct comparison between the ADS and the 2021 Census.

Accompanying articles highlight features of the data and explain important conceptual differences and data limitations compared with the Census, ABS population estimates and ABS dwelling stock estimates.

What are other countries doing?

Australia is working with other countries that have similar data landscapes to ours, including Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

These countries are increasing their use of administrative data to support traditional Census taking and some have released new population and housing products alongside their Census.

For example, New Zealand has released two iterations of a new [Administrative population census \(APC\)](https://www.stats.govt.nz/administrative-population-census)

www.stats.govt.nz/experimental/experimental-administrative-population-census/) since 2021. Regular releases and improvements to the APC form part of New Zealand's longer-term strategy to transform their Census of population and housing.

Recently we started design and transformation work for our 2031 Census and beyond. Administrative data is expected to play an increasingly significant role in the future of the Census, improving the quality, richness, and efficiency of the Census.

Your feedback and suggestions for improving the Administrative data snapshot will be an important part of this journey.

We'd like your feedback

This is an experimental release of a new statistical product. It has been produced to support transparency in how we are using administrative data and to get feedback on the value and potential of this kind of product.

We are open to all feedback, including:

- What is the value of this kind of product and how would it be used?
- At what frequency would it be most valuable to receive this product?
- How soon after the reference point would this product need to be available to be most useful?
- What additional household or population characteristics would be most valuable to add to this product?
- In what way would you find access to this product most valuable? (e.g. more data cubes, [TableBuilder \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder/\)](https://statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder/), ABS [DataLab \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab/\)](https://statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab/))
- Could this product change your use of the Census of population and housing or other ABS products?

Please provide your feedback by completing this [short survey \(https://consult.abs.gov.au/census/administrative-data-snapshot-of-population-and-hou/\)](https://consult.abs.gov.au/census/administrative-data-snapshot-of-population-and-hou/). Alternatively, you can email your feedback to census.futures@abs.gov.au (<mailto:census.futures@abs.gov.au>).